

Water conservation ideas

ECUA provides water for about 92,000 customers and is reminding consumers that it is always a good time to conserve water to help conserve our resources. Remember, every drop counts!

Personal Hygiene

- A five-minute shower uses about 14 gallons of water and as much as 50 gallons of water is used during a typical bath. Taking quicker showers saves water, the extra cost of heating it, and your money.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving. Wet your toothbrush and then draw a glass of water for rinsing. Before shaving, partially fill the sink with warm water for rinsing the razor blade.
- Repair dripping faucets. A faucet dripping at one drop per second loses up to 2,700 gallons of water per year.
- Low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators can lower home water consumption to 2.5 gallons a minute, helping save water and cutting your water-heating costs as much as 50 percent.
- When replacing old faucets, install a one-hand mixer that delivers water at the desired temperature more quickly.

Toilets

- Flushing toilets accounts for almost 40 percent of indoor residential water use. Avoid flushing toilets unnecessarily. More than five billion gallons of water every day is flushed away daily in the U.S.
- Leaking toilets can waste up to 370 gallons of water daily making the repair of leaking toilets very cost effective.
- Replace older toilets with new-model, low-flow toilets. All toilets currently manufactured in the US use no more than 1.6 gallons per flush, less than half the water required by the original “low-flow” toilets introduced in the 1980s and significantly lower than the 5-to-6 gallons required by older toilets.
- When choosing a new toilet, consider a model with dual flush option.

Laundry

- Operate washing machine only when fully loaded.
- Use quick cycle button for lightly soiled cloth.
- Don't pre-wash. Modern detergents do the same job in a single wash cycle.
- Choose Energy Star certified models when choosing a new washing machine.
- Front-loading washers use 20 gallons or less of water, about half the amount used by large, top-loading washers. The cleaning action of front-loading washers is as good as or superior to traditional washers with less wear and tear on clothes.

In the Kitchen

- Operate the dishwasher only when fully loaded and use quick cycle button for lightly soiled dishes.
- Dishwashers use less water and energy than hand-washing dishes.
- When washing dishes by hand, partially fill the sink. Do not let water run.
- Consider replacing an older dishwasher with a newer, more efficient model.

- Start a compost pile. Operating a garbage disposal properly requires a great deal of water. Using compost to fertilize your landscaping can reduce the need for watering.

In the Yard

- Irrigation, such as lawn sprinklers, accounts for more than 60 percent of residential water use during the warmer months.
- Over-watering your plants can cause excess water to move through the soil or run off.
- You can measure how much water you use by placing shallow containers around your lawn or garden to collect water samples from your sprinklers.
- Avoid mowing during droughts as it adds stress to grass and is only relieved by more irrigation.
- Cover exposed areas with pine straw or mulch and leave grass clippings. The light layer discourages the germination of weeds, preserves soil moisture and returns organic matter to the soil.
- Minimize grass areas in your yard. Less grass means less water needed.
- One of the best ways to conserve water is to use [native, drought-tolerant plants](#). Also known as [Xeriscaping](#), it will enable you to establish and maintain an environmentally healthy and attractive landscape.
- The best time to water your lawn is in the early morning when there is less evaporation and high humidity and dew adds to moisture. Watering in the early morning helps prevent lawn diseases by allowing time for your lawn to dry before nightfall.
- One of the best ways to water your landscape is to use a “drip systems” that gets water directly to the root of the plant where it is most needed. Such systems also eliminate accidental watering of impervious surfaces, such as driveways and sidewalks.
- Set rain sensors on your irrigation system to 1/4” so your sprinkler system will automatically shut off when it rains.
- Use a broom or leaf blower, rather than a water hose to clean your driveway, patio and sidewalks.
- Vehicle washing should be kept to a minimum. A car wash uses about half the water needed to self-wash your car and the wastewater is properly discharged. If you wash your car at home use soap and a bucket, doing a quick rinse only for the final rinse.

For more water saving tips visit the [Escambia County Extension Service](#), [The Northwest Florida Water Management District](#) and download [111 Water Saving Tips](#).